

COUNTRY

East Germany

TOPIC: Merseburg Airfield

EVALUATION	25X1	PLACE OBTAINED	25X1
DATE OF CONTENT	21 October to 12 November 1952		
DATE OBTAINED	25X1	DATE PREPARED	15 December 1952
REFERENCES	25X1		
PAGES	5	ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE)	3 - three sketches on ditto 25X1
REMARKS	REFERENCE COPY DO NOT CIRCULATE		

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1. The following observations were made at Merseburg airfield between 21 October and 13 November 1952:

21 October. There was no air activity. The visibility was limited to 1 km, and the cloud base was at an altitude of 300 meters.

22 October. Between 9:10 a.m. and 3 p.m., individual flights were made by two single-engine planes. There was a 10/10 overcast, light fog and a visibility of about 500 meters.

23 October. Between 4 and 11 p.m., individual local flights were made by MiG-15s. The weather was good.

24 October. Between 9:40 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., there was formation flying by 4, 8 and 16 MiG-15s including 12 planes. The weather was favorable.

25 October. Individual flights were made by the jet fighters [redacted]. The visibility was limited to 4 km, and the cloud ceiling was at an altitude of 600 meters. After nightfall, flying was practiced in elements of two planes which maintained the interval and distance rather poorly.

26 October. Thirty-three MiG-15 and type-29 planes were counted at the field.

[redacted] There were no clouds.

27 October. Between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m., MiG-15s, [redacted] flew in elements of two and in flights for 45 to 60 minutes. The visibility was good, and there were no clouds. Formation flying was again performed rather poorly so that it appeared that the pilots had not much experience in flying MiG-15 planes.

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28 October. Between 3:15 a.m. and 4:20 p.m., individual flying was practiced by aircraft [redacted]

[redacted] There was a 10/10 overcast, the cloud base being at an altitude of 600 meters. The visibility was limited to 2 km.

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29 October. Throughout the day, there was individual flying by two MiG-15's [redacted] It rained continuously. After nightfall, flying was practiced in elements of two at a distance of about 10 aircraft lengths. The aircraft flew in the clouds.

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30 October. Individual flying was practiced throughout the day in good weather. Between 6:30 and 10 p.m., MiG-15s circled over the field.

31 October. Between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., there was individual flying for times ranging between 30 and 60 minutes. [redacted]

[redacted] There was a 10/10 overcast at an altitude of 600 meters and a visibility of 4 km. Between 5:40 and 7 p.m., flying was practiced in elements of two, the distance between the two planes being about 10 aircraft lengths. Formation flying was performed rather poorly.

1 November. There was no air activity up to 1 p.m.

2 and 3 November. No flights were made. It rained continuously, and the visibility was limited to about 400 meters.

4 November. Between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m., individual MiG-15s circled over the field. There was good visibility. The cloud base was at an altitude of 600 meters. Between 5:30 and about 10 p.m., night flying was practiced in elements of two. The planes flew in elements of two, the distance between the two planes being about 20 aircraft lengths. After the take-off, the planes disappeared in the clouds.

5 November. Individual flights were made by MiG-15s. The visibility was limited to 3 km, and the cloud ceiling was at an altitude of 600 meters. Aircraft observed at the field included 31 MiG-15s, 1 type-29 plane, 1 Yak-11 plane and 1 single-engine, low-wing monoplane.

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6 to 13 November. Individual local flights were made on 6, 11 and 12 November. [redacted]

2. There was an estimated occupation of 1,300 men wearing black-bordered blue epaulets, 30 to 100 men wearing red-bordered black epaulets with artillery insignia, and about 15 men wearing black-bordered black epaulets. Between 27 October and 1 November, soldiers wearing red-bordered black epaulets were assigned to guard duty at the field.¹
3. All the MiG-15s at the field were equipped with auxiliary fuel tanks. Air activity performed at the field indicated that some of the pilots had much experience in flying on MiG-15s including instrument flying, while the other portion of pilots still conducted basic flight training such as local flights. Instrument flying was seldom performed on Yak-11 or type-29 planes. The front and side windows around the pilot's seat were covered with black curtains.²

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4. The engines of the MiG-15's were started, according to two methods. It was mostly observed that the engines were started by the pilots in the cabin. At first, either a roaring or a whistling noise was heard, the latter being followed by the roaring noise after about 30 seconds. It was often observed that this procedure was particularly quick and that the engine was running only one minute after the pilot entered the cabin. The aircraft engines were seldom started by means of a two-wheel carriage which stood under the nose of the plane.

5. Two alert flights were continuously parked east of the east end of the runway and about 100 meters south of the runway respectively. The alert planes were parked either in one line parallel to the runway or at a right angle to the runway with the aircraft noses pointing to the west. It was frequently observed that 5 to 10 men did maintenance work on the planes. A detail of at least three sentries guarded the planes. Since the planes were not moved at nightfall and were still there on the early morning, source believed that they remained at the dispersal area during the night. It was seldom observed that one of the eight planes was started by means of a starter carriage. Since there was traffic between the planes and a nearby trailer, [redacted] the pilots stayed in this trailer if there was no air activity. 25X1

6. Maintenance work on MiG-15 was performed in the open. Two to four men awaited each MiG-15 which returned from a flight. Maintenance work on the parked aircraft was in progress almost continuously. If larger repairs were necessary, the planes were towed into the repair hangar. It was observed through the open gate that a MiG-15 or individual sections such as wings and tail units were suspended in the repair hangar. Spare parts were probably hauled to the field in closed trucks or by rail. Boxes containing spare parts have not been observed at the field. It is possible that an intermediate overhauling of planes was performed at another airfield because it was repeatedly observed that individual MiG-15's took off from the field and did not return on the same day.

7. Recently, it was not observed that aircraft crates arrived at the field. No such crates could be observed at the field. Almost every day, two to six railroad cars arrived at the field. The cars were disconnected from the locomotive near the western hangar. [redacted] could not observe what was being loaded or unloaded because the building in front of the cars obstructed the view. 25X1

8. Up to 5 November, only one AA gun emplacement on the northern edge of the field was occupied by six guns which were covered with tarpaulins. Only the barrels projected from the canvas. Eight trucks were parked nearby. It was not observed that the guns were used for training activity. The personnel of the AA unit wore red-bordered black epaulets. They were quartered in the former headquarters building at the field.

9. Every evening between 5:15 and 5:30 p.m., mail was picked up at the Nersburg railroad station, put into canvas bags and hauled away on truck # 1-13-47. [redacted]

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10. At about 2 p.m. on 25 October, four MiG-15s were parked at the east end of the runway. After 3:30 p.m., a jeep towed three MiG-15s out of the westernmost hangar. Subsequently, the planes were parked near the four MiG-15s at the east end of the runway. The towed plane was coupled to the jeep by a rod which was attached to the strut of the nose wheel. Between 11:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. on 1 November, there was no air activity. The weather cleared up. On 2 November, seven MiG-15s were parked at the east end of the runway, but no flights were made.

11. The Lurbo type radar set was still observed in the southwestern corner of the field. Another radar set with four groups of dipoles was located at the wall in the southeastern section of the field. About 10 meters north of this set, another radar set was observed after 25 October.⁵

12. After 1 November, an excavator was being used on the southern edge of the field. Ten fuel tanks lay beside the mounds of sand.⁶

13. At 10 a.m. on 31 October, 12 MiG-15s were parked south of the east end of the runway. At 11:35 and 11:50 a.m. respectively, one MiG-15 took off. No landings were observed. Six tank trucks were parked near the warehouse on the eastern edge of the field. Six spotlights were observed between the field border and the landing beacon. [Redacted]

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1. [Redacted] Comment. Horseburg airfield is occupied by a fighter regiment. The air activity observed shows that the pilots of the regiment have a different status of training. Some of the pilots are apparently able to fly even in bad weather while the other pilots have not yet reached the final state of training. [Redacted]

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2. [Redacted] Comment. For sketch of the flight course observed during instrument flight training, see Annex 1. The purpose of this flight course cannot be determined. It is possible that the plane approached the landing beacon two times, once from the south and the other time from the north, before flying along the flying lane toward the field.

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3. [Redacted] Comment. It was previously reported that 2 to 3 cars with concrete plates, each 60 x 65 cm and 10 cm thick, arrived at the field coming from the Rumersrohr factory. [Redacted] Melinex was mentioned as consignee of the shipment. This designation is reported for the first time. The concrete plates are allegedly to be used for the construction of taxiways.

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4. [Redacted] Comment. It was previously believed that two light AA batteries, each of six 37-mm guns, were located at the field. It cannot be determined whether one battery meanwhile left the field. Recently, it has been noticed at various fighter fields that only a light AA battery was stationed there.

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5. [Redacted] Comment. The arrival of a radar set with four groups of dipoles was previously reported [Redacted]

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The arrival of the radar set with two Yagi

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antennas is reported for the first time. The presence of these three sets was also reported from Wittstock, Laerz and Gardelegen airfield.

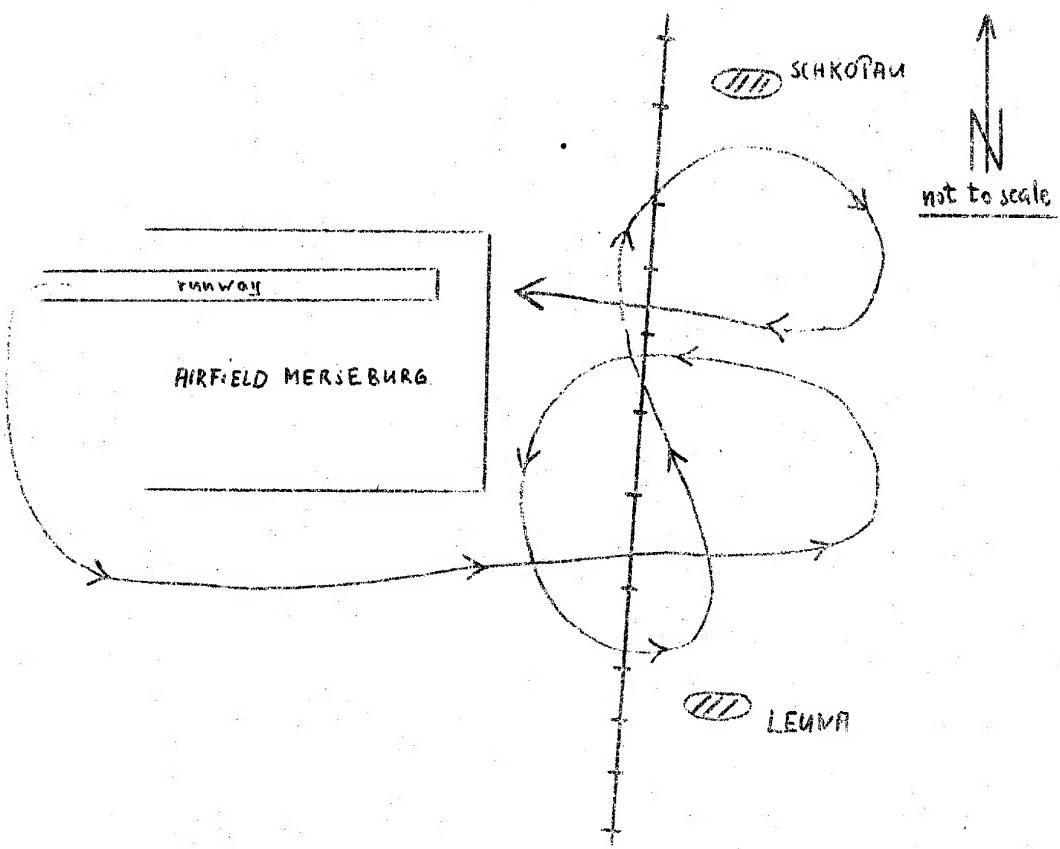
The Lumbo type radar set or the set with four groups of dipoles is probably used for early warning of the approach of enemy planes, the other one of the two sets is probably used as fighter control set and the set with two Yagi antennas is probably used as IFF set. For location of sets, see Annex 2. For sketch of set with two Yagi antennas, see Annex 3.

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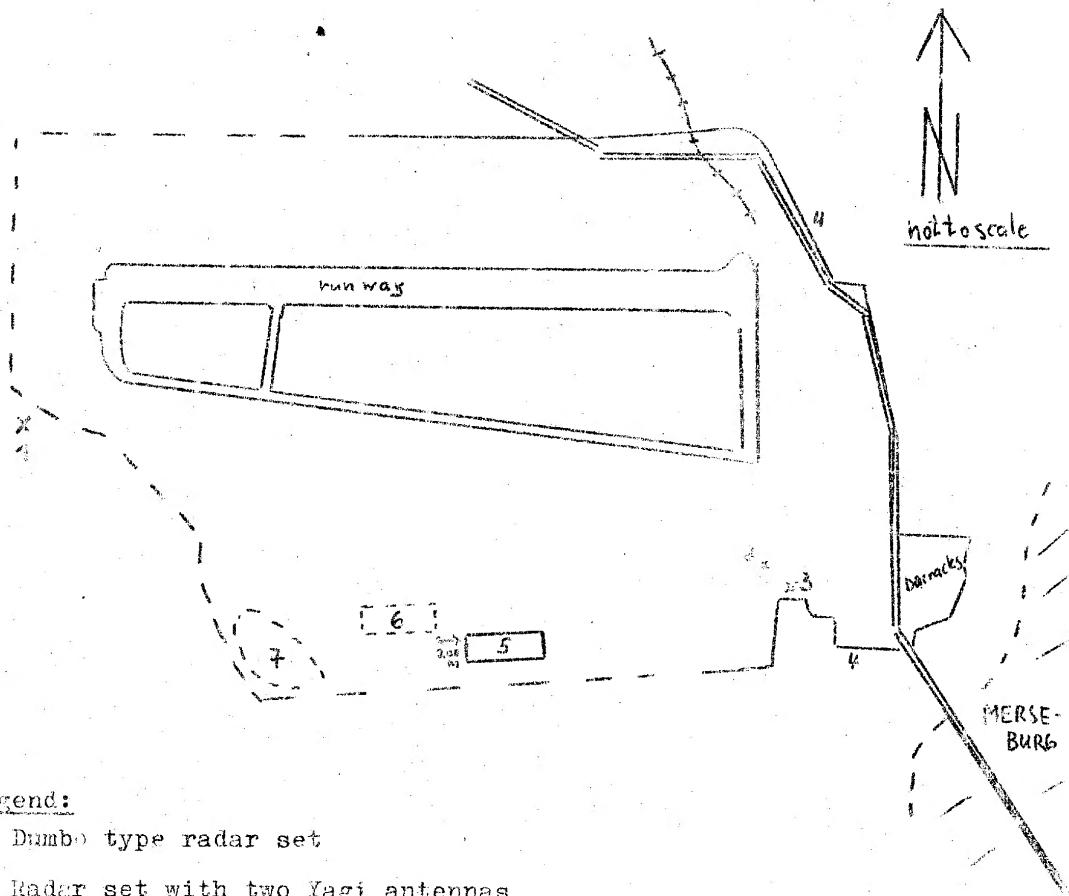
6. [REDACTED] Comment. Another fuel dump is possibly being erected next to the fuel dump on the southern edge of the field. The concrete slabs mentioned in paragraph 3 of this comment are possibly used for the construction of the new fuel dump. For location of fuel dumps, see Annex 2.

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Course Observed /Instrument Flying at Merseburg Airfield
during

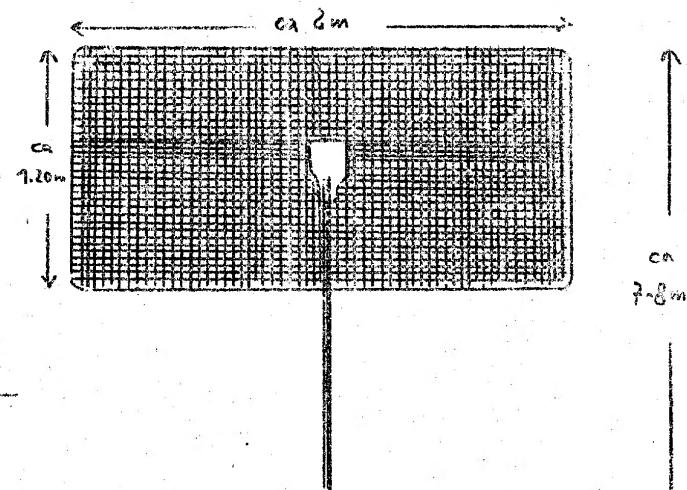
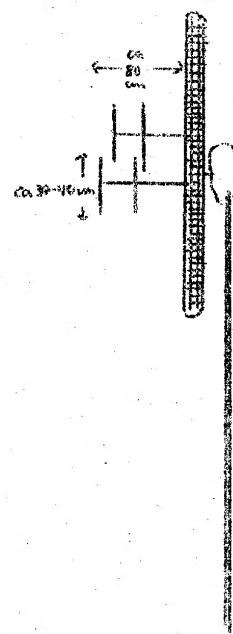


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Radar Sets and Fuel Dumps at Merseburg AirfieldLegend:

- 1 Dumbo type radar set
- 2 Radar set with two Yagi antennas
- 3 Radar set with four groups of dipoles
- 4 Wall
- 5 Fuel dump
- 6 Fuel dump under construction
- 7 Ammunition dump and firing range

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Radar Set with Two Yagi Antennas at Merseburg Airfieldfront - viewside - view

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